

REPORT - PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

June 9, 2005

June 23, 2005

Project Name and Number: FREMONT PARK GOLF CENTER (PLN2005-00281)

Applicant: Diane Harrow, VB Golf

Proposal: To consider a Preliminary Grading Plan to redistribute approximately 14,000 cubic yards of soil and install synthetic turf on an existing golf driving range.

Recommended Action: Approve based on findings and subject to conditions.

Location: 39751 Stevenson Place

APN: 525-1-17-1; 525-1-20

Area: Approximately 7.7 acres (driving range area only)

Owner: City of Fremont

Agent of Applicant: Same

Environmental Review: This project is statutorily exempt from CEQA review per CEQA Guidelines section 15304 (a), Minor alterations to land.

Existing General Plan: Institutional Open Space

Existing Zoning: O-S Open Space District

Existing Land Use: Golf Driving Range

Public Hearing Notice: Public hearing notification is applicable. 89 notices were mailed to owners and occupants of property within a minimum radius of 300 feet from the site on the following streets: Valdez Way, San Moreno Place, San Moreno Court, Stevenson Place, San Simeon Court, Catalina Place, San Carlos Place, Lucinda Court, Seville Court, San Carlos Court, and Seville Place. The notices to owners and occupants were mailed on May 13, 2005. A Public Hearing Notice was delivered to The Argus newspaper on May 9, 2005 to be published by May 12, 2005.

Executive Summary: The applicant is requesting approval of a Preliminary Grading Plan to redistribute approximately 14,000 cubic yards of soil and install synthetic turf on the existing golf driving range located at Fremont Park Golf Center.

Background: The project site is generally located at the southerly end of Stevenson Place. The project area is part of the existing Fremont Park Golf Center that consists of a nine hole golf course, a driving range, a clubhouse and maintenance facility and the associated public parking lots. The Fremont Park Golf Center operates under Conditional Use Permit U-98-2.

Project Description: The applicant proposes a Preliminary Grading Plan to redesign the existing target greens of the driving range to create a higher quality golf experience. The proposed improvements will also improve the storm drain system. The original design of the driving range was covered with natural turf grass. The original natural turf has nearly disappeared due to over compaction caused by the ball picker. Additionally, the original construction did not include enough topographic changes in elevation to direct storm runoff to the collection basins. The slow movement of water across the surface and low spots allowed water to saturate the soil and created mud holes. This has contributed to the loss of turf grass.

The proposed project would recontour the site to improve the storm water drainage system. Two new wet wells with de-watering pump stations will be located within the driving range to discharge into the existing storm drainage system. After the re-grading and storm drain improvements a layer of base rock will be distributed over the site and synthetic turf will be installed. Different colors of the synthetic turf will be used to indicate different features of the driving range. The fairway area will be a natural rye grass color; the target greens will be a bent grass color; the sand traps will be white; and the "ponds" will be a blue synthetic turf color. The synthetic turf will be top dressed with sand. Synthetic turf is a permeable surface. The use of synthetic turf will improve the experience of the golfers and reduce maintenance costs by eliminating irrigation water, fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, and mowing. The use of synthetic turf for golf courses is growing in popularity.

Project Analysis:

General Plan and Zoning Conformance: The General Plan land use designation for the project site is Institutional Open Space. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan designation. The project meets General Plan Land Use and Parks and Recreations Goals and Policies as follows:

FUNDAMENTAL GOAL F-12 PARKS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Policy LU 4.3 Development on land designated Institutional Open Space is limited to compatible recreational and community uses.

The proposed project would meet this policy since this is an existing facility and the proposed project would enhance the recreational use.

Parks and Recreation Goal 2: Park lands and recreation facilities to reflect Fremont's image and identity

Policy PR 2.1.1: Maintain and enhance the City's parks and recreation facilities and resources that significantly contribute to Fremont's image and identity.

The proposed project would meet this policy by improving the appearance of the driving range facility and by improving storm water drainage on the site.

The zoning designation is O-S Open Space District. The operation of the driving range is subject to Conditional Use Permit U-98-2. The purpose of the CUP is to ensure that the proposed project is consistent with all policies and regulations.

Grading/Topography: The project site is the existing Fremont Family Golf Driving Range, which is at the southern terminus of Stevenson Place. The grading proposal is to remove the existing natural turf on the driving range, remove the existing storm drain system, and re-contour the site in preparation for the installation of a new artificial turf surface. In addition to the redesign of the driving range surface, the applicant intends to install a 2-story tee structure, which will allow for an increase in the number of golfers that can simultaneously use the driving range. The new tee structure is shown for reference but is not part of the preliminary grading plan application.

The grading design includes sculpting the land to create small hills and shallow depressions to provide increased ground slopes to direct runoff more efficiently to the storm drain system. The driving range design also mimics a golf course.

The project civil engineer has estimated total rough grading to be 14,000 cubic yards. The rough grading will consist of cut and fill using the existing on-site soil, no import or export is anticipated at the rough grading stage. The fine grading operation includes placement of approximately 4 inches of base rock, installation of the artificial turf, and spreading a layer of sand over the artificial turf to hold it in place. The base rock and sand have not been accounted for in the project civil engineer's estimate. Staff estimates that approximately 3,400 cubic yards of base rock and 1,000 cubic yards of sand will be imported into the site. The import and placement of these materials brings the total estimated grading to approximately 18,400 cubic yards of grading. The source and haul route for the import material is subject to review and approval prior to issuance of the grading permit.

Drainage: The project includes the installation of a new underground storm drain system within the driving range. The facility designer, Tanner Consulting Group, has proposed the installation of two new wet wells, each one equipped with two dewatering pumps. The pumps are intended to transfer runoff from the driving range into an existing pond in the golf course. The provided plan is a rough grading plan and though it shows a schematic storm drain system, the plan does not include complete information demonstrating how the system will work or how it will be constructed. Prior to issuance any permit for the installation of the storm drain system, the project civil engineer and/or the facility designer shall provide a utility and drainage plan with supporting calculations. The final storm drain design shall be subject to review and approval of both the City Engineer and the Alameda County Flood Control District.

Urban Runoff Clean Water Program: The Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 and Water Quality Act (1987) require localities throughout the nation to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit (NPDES) in order to discharge storm water into public waterways such as creeks, rivers, channels and bays. The applicant will comply with the City's Urban Runoff Clean Water Program in accordance with the NPDES requirements issued by the State's Water Quality Control Board. Prior to approval of the grading permit, the developer must demonstrate compliance with the NPDES permit requirements.

Geologic Hazards: The project site is within an area of potential liquefaction on the Seismic Hazard Zones, Niles Quadrangle map, released by the State Geologist on October 19, 2004. The proposed grading project is not subject to the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act because no subdivisions of land or structures for human occupancy are proposed.

Environmental Analysis: This project is statutory exempt from CEQA review per CEQA Guidelines section 15304 (a), Minor alterations to land.

Enclosures: Exhibit "A" (Preliminary Grading Plan)
Applicant letter

Exhibits: Exhibit "A" (Preliminary Grading Plan)
Exhibit "B" (Findings and Conditions)

Recommended Actions:

1. Hold public hearing.
2. Find PLN2005-00281 is in conformance with the relevant provisions contained in the City's existing General Plan. These provisions include the designations, goals and policies set forth in the General Plan's Land Use and Parks and Recreation Chapters as enumerated within the staff report.
3. Find PLN2005-00281 per Exhibit "A" (Preliminary Grading Plan) and Exhibit "B" (Findings and Conditions) fulfills the applicable requirements set forth in the Fremont Municipal Code.
4. Approve PLN2005-00281 in conformance with Exhibit "A" (Preliminary Grading Plan) and Exhibit "B" (Findings and Conditions).

Existing Zoning
Shaded Area represents the Project Site

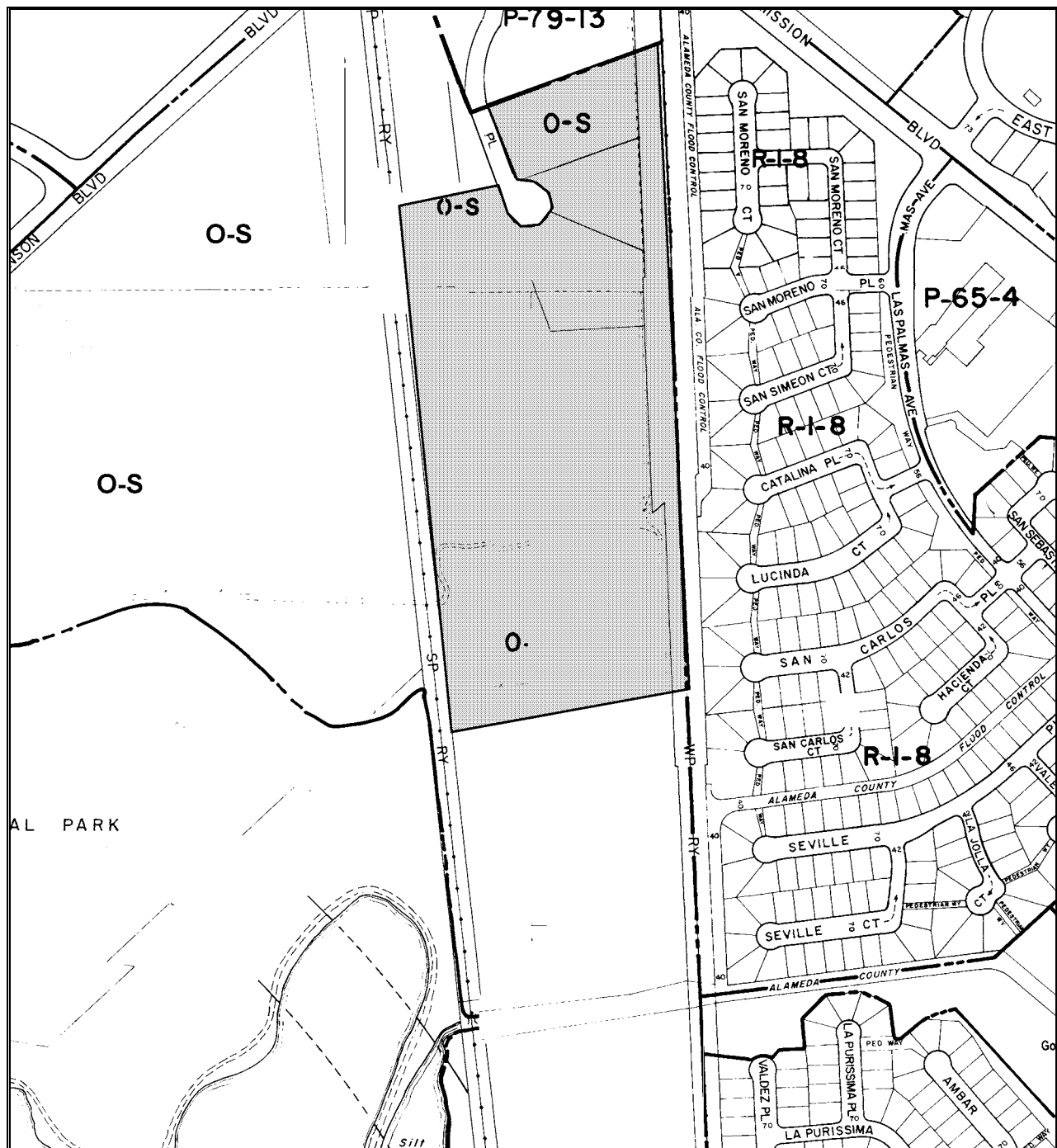


EXHIBIT "B"
Fremont Park Golf Center
Preliminary Grading Plan

FINDINGS

The findings below are made on the basis of information contained in the staff report to the Planning Commission dated June 23, 2005, as well as information presented at the public hearing, incorporated herein.

1. The proposed project described in the application will not have an appearance, due to the grading, excavation, or fill, substantially and negatively different from the existing natural appearance.
2. The proposed project described in the application will not endanger public sewers, storm drains, water courses, streets, street improvements, or other property; will not interfere with existing drainage courses; and will not result in debris being deposited on any public way. The proposed development will not alter or obstruct the natural flow from abutting properties or divert drainage from its natural watershed. The applicant will be required to submit a plan to control erosion and siltation during and after construction for review and approval by the City Engineer.
3. The proposed project described in the application will not unacceptably affect the health, safety, and or welfare of adjacent residents or landowners, nor the citizens of Fremont.
4. The project site is within an area of potential liquefaction on the Seismic Hazard Zones, Niles Quadrangle map, released by the State Geologist on October 19, 2004. The proposed grading project is not subject to the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act because no subdivisions of land or structures for human occupancy are proposed. The proposed project described in the application will not result in geologic or topographic instability on or near the site.

PRELIMINARY GRADING PLAN CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. The project shall conform to Exhibit "A" (Preliminary Grading Plan) and all conditions of approval set forth herein.
2. Approval of this preliminary grading plan does not extend to the final detailed design approval necessary to be accomplished in connection with the development plans.
3. Approval of this preliminary grading plan shall terminate 24 months from the date of approval by the Planning Commission.
4. The developer shall obtain a final grading permit in accordance with the Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance (Chapter 4, Title VIII of the Municipal Code). Grading shall be subject to the approval of the City Engineer.
5. Site grading shall not obstruct natural flow from abutting properties or divert drainage from its natural watershed.
6. The applicant shall provide for a functional system to control erosion and siltation during and after grading subject to review and approval by the City Engineer. An erosion and sediment control plan shall be included as part of the grading plans.
7. Prior to issuance of a grading permit for land disturbance greater than one acre, the developer is to provide evidence that a Notice of Intent has been filed with the State of California Water Resources Control Board. Evidence shall include the WDID number assigned by the State. The developer is responsible for insuring that all contractors are aware of all storm water quality measures contained in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).
8. A disposal site for the off-site haul dirt materials or source for the import fill shall be approved by the City prior to the approval of the grading permit. The off-site haul route for the excess dirt or import fill shall be subject to the approval of the City Engineer.

9. The project storm drain design shall be subject to review and approval of both the City Engineer and the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. The storm drain design shall incorporate provisions to prevent increased inundation of downstream properties within the 100-year floodplain. Increased inundation includes a rise in the base flood elevations or an increase in the land area within the 100-year floodplain.
10. The developer shall comply with the City's Urban Runoff Clean Water Program in accordance with the NPDES requirements issued by the State's Water Quality Control Board.
11. On-site storm drain inlets shall be clearly marked with the words "No Dumping Flows to Bay."